

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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1. Tashkent is the economic, industrial, and military center of Central Asia, an area which includes the five Soviet Republics of Kazakh, Uzbek, Turkmen, Tadzhik, and Kirgiz. As one example, the headquarters of the coal administration (SredAzUgol - Central Asian Coal) is in Tashkent. However, SredAzUgol is not over the Karaganda mines, the third largest coal producing area in the USSR, which is in the northern Kazakh SSR. Karaganda is under Siberian jurisdiction. Tashkent's governmental status is that of capital of the Uzbek SSR.

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ver, I would like to indicate in a general way the significance of the area from the viewpoint of economy, industry, and agriculture and to mention the factors influencing the status of Central Asia. The industrial and economic stage of development of the area was not advanced as of mid-1941. Two factors - lack of basic materials needed for industry and inadequacy of transportation - affected Central Asia economically. The Soviet government developed industry near the source of raw materials. The area lacked the necessary raw materials, such as iron ore. In addition, Central Asia was distant from the main transportation routes. Transportation is the weakest point in the USSR.

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By 1935, transportation was far behind the development of industry and of the general economy. One of the main reasons for the poor living conditions and the difficulties encountered in the industrial and economic fields was the lack of transport. [redacted] as of 1941 the Soviet transportation facilities were able to meet only approximately 55% of the needs of industry and agriculture. 50X1

3. An example of how lack of transportation hamstrung industrial activity was furnished by the Tashkent Agricultural Machinery Building Plant (Tashselmash - Tashkentski Zavod Selskovo-Khoziastvenovo Machina Straieniya). This factory was constructed during the period 1929-32. It was designed to build agricultural machinery, particularly for the cotton-growing areas of Turkestan, and, during times of war, to produce light weapons. However, because of the shortage of railroad equipment, the necessary iron and coal could not be transported to the plant. As a result, Tashselmash, during the period 1933-41, worked usually at only from 3% to 5% capacity. At most, it operated at 10%. During World War II the plant did turn out such military items as mortars, hand grenades, and antitank grenades. More railroad cars were available then in the eastern USSR, as they were removed before the advancing German Army. Tashkent became very active industrially during World War II as many plants were evacuated to that area.

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